



TOWN OF BELMONT 2015 Annual Program and Prevention Updates

Dear Belmont Residents,

The Belmont Health Department is pleased to provide you with the following announcements and updates. These updates will focus on our latest public health initiatives and programs as well as a brief on the environmental health issues that have been reported to us lately.



Influenza vaccine will be available to Belmont residents five years and older at two upcoming community flu clinics on a first come first serve basis. The clinics will be at the Chenery Middle School from 10am-12pm on October 17 and at the Temple Beth El on October 21 from 6-8pm. Although insurance is not required to get vaccinated, residents are asked to bring their health insurance cards, as the town can be reimbursed for administering vaccine. Vaccine is the single most effective way to protect yourself and your family from the flu!



The Stress Less Campaign!
A Public Education Series Presentation
Youth and Family Coordinator and Community Social Worker Janet Amdur secured grant funding to provide residents with a series of public talks, classes and workshops revolving around stress management techniques and building self-care and resiliency to manage daily stress. The campaign kicks off on October 8th at the Belmont High School Little Theatre with acclaimed author and speaker Dr. Anthony Rao, PhD speaking about "The Way of Boys"

which will provide insights on the challenges and stresses of raising young boys and how to encourage positive behaviors successfully. Other programs include laughter yoga for families, mindfulness meditation, how to help kids manage stress and strategies to help kids stay alcohol and drug free. Call the Health Department or check our website for details.



MDPH Bureau of Substance Abuse Services Grant Collaborative

Belmont is participating in a regional program to prevent underage drinking and drug use. With Wayside Multi-Service Center as the lead and guiding organization who obtained the grant from the BSAS, the communities of Brookline, Belmont, Watertown and Waltham will assess needs, develop strategies and implement policy changes and recommendations that are evidence based and data driven. The Belmont Office of Selectmen, Town Administration, Police Department, School Department and Health Department will start by focusing on capacity building and gathering data to determine Belmont's needs and concerns regarding underage drinking and drug use.



Household Hazardous Waste Collection

There are only two more household hazardous waste collection days left this year! The days are October 17th and November 7. Starting this year, the Health Department does not require pre-registration for participants, just bring proof of residency. The collection is open from 9-2; located at 60 Hartwell Ave in Lexington.



RODENTS

The Belmont Health Department staff is still receiving many rat complaints and sightings from residents of Belmont. All of the rat harborage areas confirmed by Health Department staff have been on private property. Additionally public property such

as parks, school yards, and sewers are being monitored by DPW and Health Department staff.

WE NEED YOUR HELP SO WE ARE ASKING YOU TO PLEASE CHECK YOUR PROPERTY FOR ANY RODENT ACTIVITY AND/OR RODENT HARBORAGE AREAS AND TAKE CORRECTIVE ACTIONS!

STEPS YOU CAN TAKE ON YOUR PROPERTY TO ASSIST US:

1. Use covered trash barrels made of metal or heavy plastic instead of bags for your trash! Do not put out your trash out earlier than the night before your pick-up.
2. Maintain your property in a sanitary manner, so as to reduce the potential for rodents. Keep grills clean; store woodpiles neatly with a foot clearance from the ground.
3. Rodent proof all accessory structures and garages using durable materials such as ¼ inch mesh, metal hardware, or sheet metal. Eliminate all gaps greater than ¼ inch.
4. Reduce or eliminate available food, water, and harborage that can be used by rodents. Do not leave pet food out at night and take down birdfeeders that rodents can access.
5. Remove dog and cat feces from your yard on a regular basis
6. Thin out vegetation keep grass and shrubbery cut short.
7. If you live in rental housing, routinely inspect the property for evidence of rodents, if you see signs of rodents, tell your landlord.

If you discover a rat or other rodent problem on your property we advise you to contact a licensed pest control operator for assistance. Please feel free to contact the Health Department at 617-993-2720 for questions, or a list of pest control operators.

It is your responsibility to maintain your property so as to avoid a rat problem and to eliminate any infestations!



AVOIDING MOSQUITOES

Continue to take precautions against mosquitoes until after the first frost: avoid outdoor activities between dusk and dawn. If you must go out, cover up with long sleeves and pants and wear mosquito

repellent. Fix all holes and screens, and empty stagnant water containers such as bird baths and tires. There have been three confirmed human cases of West Nile Virus this year in Massachusetts. Belmont is part of the East Middlesex Mosquito Control Project, and this summer staff of this program treated over 2,000 catchbasins with larvicide and monitored several mosquito traps for infected mosquitoes.



Other Nuisance investigations

Additional calls to the Health Department include trash complaints, piles of discarded yard waste, dog waste, electric sanding, messy lawns, and nuisance wildlife.

Please keep the following information in mind:

1. The Health Department/Animal Control cannot come on private property to pick up dead rodents, birds, or other wildlife –sorry. That is your responsibility.
2. Again, please keep your lawns mowed and yards clean! Your lawn should not be over a foot tall and weeds should be kept to a minimum and there should be no long standing piles of clutter and debris.
3. Abrasive blasting and electric sanding is not allowed unless the machinery is connected to a commercial grade HEPA vacuum!
4. When on a walk with your dogs please carry sufficient bags to scoop the poop – do not place the bags in other resident trash cans or the stormdrains. Take it home with you for disposal.

Reminder: Is your family prepared for an emergency? Find out by logging on to the Belmont Emergency Management website at: <http://www.belmont-ma.gov/emergency-management-agency>